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Junior doctor is cleared of manslaughter after feeding tube error

A junior doctor who was charged with manslaughter after a patient died because a feeding tube was incorrectly inserted was cleared last week after just 28 minutes' deliberation by a jury at Nottingham crown court.

Hiral Hazari, now 25, was accused of causing the death of 78 year old Maura Katherine O'Reilly by gross negligence when he was a 23 year old pre-registration house officer, just six weeks into his first job.

Mrs O'Reilly, a mother of six, died after she was fed through a nasogastric tube that was wrongly fitted. The crown's case was that Dr Hazari had been asked by nurses to look at an x ray picture that would have shown that the tube was protruding into a lung and had given the go ahead for feeding to start.

But Dr Hazari, who was in charge of three acute wards and one other ward at Leicester's Glenfield Hospital when the incident happened, told the court he had no recollection of having seen the picture. Had he seen it, he said, he would not have authorised the feeding to go ahead.

Clare Dyer legal correspondent, *BMJ*

WHO faces funding controversy over new food fund

A new \$40m (£25m; €37m) global fund to help the world's poorest countries to raise food safety standards was launched by the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization last week amid controversy over whether the fund would accept donations from the food industry.

The trust fund aims to help about 120 developing countries implement the United Nations' Codex Alimentarium, which seeks to set food standards that protect the health of consumers and ensure fair practices in food trade.



Health community joins anti war march in London

Doctors, nurses, and international health specialists joined the biggest demonstration in British history on Saturday to protest against the prospect of a war on Iraq.

As millions demonstrated across the world, 300 staff from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and members of the UK pressure group of health professionals Medact and the Medical Practitioners' Union marched with an estimated 1.5 million people in London.

Before setting off, Medact member Dr Biplab Nandi was photographed with doctors "turning their backs on war" to reveal some of the health costs that could result from such a conflict.

Dr June Crown, Medact's president, said: "All health professionals have a vital role in speaking up against this war to draw attention to the likely health consequences. We call on Tony Blair to heed the facts and figures in our recent report, *Collateral Damage*." According to this report, war on Iraq would result in an 82% increase in infant deaths.

Sarah Macdonald *London*

US consumer groups and the International Baby Food Action Network attacked WHO, accusing it of planning to accept donations from the food industry and said that poor states in receipt of such funds might be unduly influenced by food industry interests.

"The WHO's plan for the trust fund violates the agency's own guidelines for acceptance of industry money and creates an insidious conflict of interest problem," said Bruce Silverglade, president of the International Association of Consumer Food Organisations, in Washington, DC.

Jorgen Schlund, the head of WHO food safety, dismissed the group's claims, however. He said that the fund had received \$130 000 in donations from the Swiss and Norwegian governments and that initially the

organisation would only seek public money.

Fiona Fleck *Geneva*

AIDS vaccine trial begins in Uganda

Researchers working at the Uganda Virus Research Institute have begun a trial of an AIDS vaccine with the aim of vaccinating 50 volunteers not infected with HIV, it was announced last week.

The vaccine has been developed to prevent infection with the A strain of HIV, the subtype that is prevalent in Uganda and other parts of east Africa. It represents a major step forward in efforts to prevent the spread of AIDS in Africa, as other vaccines currently being investigated are designed to combat the B strain of HIV, found in the United States and Europe.

Several people have already volunteered to take part, and weekly information seminars are being held in Entebbe to recruit more.

The vaccine being tested in the trial contains two components—naked DNA and modified vaccinia Ankara (MVA), a weakened smallpox virus—both of which contain a small insert of DNA derived from HIV. The vaccine was developed in a joint project between the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (a non-profit organisation that sponsors AIDS vaccine development), the Medical Research Council Human Immunology Unit at the University of Oxford, and the University of Nairobi.

Susan Mayor *London*

Dutch health service is asked to draw up smallpox contingency plans

The Dutch Ministry of Health has written to all local health services, asking them to complete contingency plans by April for the mass vaccination against smallpox of the Dutch population of 16 million.

It has told all 39 municipal health services that although there is "no actual threat of an outbreak of smallpox" the "current political instability in the world" means that a "high priority" should be given to preparing for an outbreak, possibly on a large scale.

The mass vaccination option is just one part of plans to counter bioterrorism being drawn up by the National Coordination Centre for Communicable Disease Control (www.infectieziekten.info).

Tony Sheldon *Utrecht*

EU parliament calls for tougher rules on breast implants

The European parliament has given its backing to tougher health and safety rules across the European Union on breast implants. The move follows a 10 year cam-